



# *Quick Reads*

Dr. Mariannette Miller-Meeks, B.S.N., M.Ed., M.D.  
Director, Iowa Department of Public Health

**March 10, 2011**

## **National Public Health Week**

National Public Health Week, April 4 to 10, is just around the corner. Once again, it is an opportunity to recognize the good work that public health professionals across Iowa are doing. The theme for the 2011 National Public Health Week is "Safety is NO accident; Live Injury-free!" According to the [Burden of Injury in Iowa](#) report, produced by IDPH and the Injury Prevention Research Center at the University of Iowa College of Public Health, injuries result in approximately 1,500 deaths, more than 17,000 hospitalizations, and more than 250,000 emergency department visits each year.

[Iowa's NPHW website](#) provides information about safety programs located in Iowa, links to resources, and events promoting safety and public health. Visit often to receive updates about Iowa's NPHW activities.

## **CHNA & HIP analysis underway**

The IDPH [Bureau of Communication and Planning](#) is working to complete the analysis of the [2011 Community Health Needs Assessment and Health Improvement Plans](#) (CHNA & HIP) from all 99 counties. The CHNA & HIP reports were due by Feb. 28, 2011. Every five years, local boards of health lead a community-wide discussion with stakeholders about their community's health needs and what might be done about them. The resulting report outlines specific goals community stakeholders have set as a priority for action, the responsible organization, timeline, and relation to one of the six overarching public health goals: preventing injuries, promoting healthy behaviors, strengthening the public health infrastructure, preventing epidemics and the spread of disease, protecting against environmental hazards, and preparing for, responding to, and recovering from public health emergencies. Analysis will assist in the [Healthy Iowans](#) assessment.

## **I-WALK moving ahead**

The IDPH Bureau of Nutrition and Health Promotion has received notice of funding from the Dept. of Public Safety's Governor's Traffic Safety Bureau in the amount of \$9,700. This funding will provide for public safety during 12 walkability assessment events during March, April and May. These assessments are part of the [I-WALK](#) (Iowans Walking Assessment Logistics Kit), an Iowa Safe Routes to School Project funded by the I-DOT. Currently, [schools](#) in 12 [communities](#) are participating in the I-WALK pilot project, launched in September 2010. Working through their local public health agency, each community addresses safety and health needs of children, grades 3-5, who walk or bicycle to school, including children with disabilities.

## **IDPH staff honored**

Congratulations to Janice Edmunds-Wells, [Office of Minority and Multicultural Health](#), who was named the "2011 Heritage Legacy Individual Award." The award, presented as part of the [I'll Make Me a World in Iowa](#) celebration, recognizes an outstanding African-American whose actions have contributed to the quality of life for African-Americans. Janice was nominated for the award by Kevin Officer of the IDPH Lead program.

Congratulations also to [Office of Disability, Injury, and Violence Prevention](#) bureau chief Binnie LeHew, who received the "[2011 Visionary Voice](#)" award from the [National Sexual Violence Resource Center](#).

## **Public health in action**

Even in this age of instant communication and electronic information, the personal touch of public health professionals still plays an important role in promoting and protecting the public's health. A good example is this story shared by Washington County Public Health Director Chrystal Woller:

"On December 23<sup>rd</sup>, [Washington County Public Health](#) received a call from IDPH Public Health Veterinarian Ann Garvey asking for assistance in a situation concerning cases of chlamydia/toxoplasmosis in a goat herd in Washington County. The transmission of these illnesses from animals to humans can be serious for pregnant women or those who are immune-compromised. The family responsible for this goat herd did not have access to a telephone, email or fax, and local public health needed to provide face-to-face health information. Although initially guarded, the wife of the farmer was willing to listen to information about the most likely source of the infection (stray cats), and how the infections are spread to other animals and potentially to humans. The family was given fact sheets for their own use and to share with others. At the end of the conversation, the family thanked us for the extra efforts made to communicate the

information. After driving away from the farm that day, I was confident the family was receptive to the information and hopeful that public health's visit increased awareness to prevent future infections. It was another reminder of our critical role in prevention and that public health is everywhere!"

On behalf of the Iowa Department of Public Health, I want to commend Chrystal and the team at Washington County Public Health for their efforts in the best tradition of core traditional public health services.

**Stay informed, share your story**

To get *Quick Reads* directly in your inbox, please send a blank e-mail to [join-quick\\_reads@lists.ia.gov](mailto:join-quick_reads@lists.ia.gov). To contribute a news item or smart practice, please write to Polly Carver-Kimm at [Polly.Carver-Kimm@idph.iowa.gov](mailto:Polly.Carver-Kimm@idph.iowa.gov).

*To everyone in public health and all our partners, keep up the great work!*

*— Dr. Miller-Meeks*